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Photo by Elaine Wilson

Top medic

Capt. Troy Smith, from Fort Hood, Texas, celebrates the completion of a 12-mile road march, the culminating event in the two-week competition for the Expert Field Medical Badge at Camp Bullis in March.

January

DoD Amputee Care Center opens at Brooke Army Medical Center

By **Nelia Schrum**
Brooke Army Medical Center Public Affairs

Flanked by eight wounded warriors with amputations, the Army’s Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Cody and the Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth Preston cut the ceremonial ribbon Jan. 14, opening the Department of Defense’s second Amputee Care Center.

Noting that the Army has 302,000 Soldiers in 120 countries, many of whom are in harm’s way in Baghdad, Mosul and Afghanistan, the 31st vice chief of staff for the Army said the opening of the Amputee Care Center represented an important part of living the warrior ethos – never leaving a fallen comrade behind.

“We are committed to taking care of you,” said Cody. “We are committed to taking care of your families.”

BAMC was selected as the second site because it is a Level 1 trauma center and a verified American Burn Association treatment center. The first center opened at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

Brig. Gen. C. William Fox Jr., the hospital commander, said more than 1,500 injured service members from the Global War on Terrorism have been patients at the facility. He said the opening ceremony for the Amputee Care Center acknowledged the passion and devotion of a generation that knew the cost of defending America.

The Amputee Care Center includes more

than 100 health care professionals. The center sports a 2,500 square foot training gym with state-of-the-art exercise and rehabilitation equipment.

The center has a therapeutic pool to help with rehabilitation. Fun therapeutic activities including horseback riding, mountain biking, skeet shooting, scuba diving, skiing and snowboarding are planned. Bagg said these activities are targeted at reintegrating Soldiers back into the community.

Although BAMC has treated 27 military members who sustained amputations, the center anticipates a patient load of more than 80 by the end of April, including some patients transferred from Walter Reed.

(From Jan. 20 issue)

Partnership takes steps to improve Fort Sam housing

Fort Sam residents must sign housing lease

Maj. Gen. George Weightman, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston commander, was the first post resident to sign a lease agreement Jan. 10 signaling the start of a new housing system and partnership.

All post residents will soon follow, as they need to sign a lease by Feb. 4 to remain in housing.

The lease authorizes the start of the resident’s basic allowance for housing and an allotment to pay the monthly rent. The allotment will start March 1. The rent will equal the BAH “with dependents” for the senior service member authorized to live in the home.

The partnership, between the Department of the Army and Lincoln Military Housing, is called Fort Sam Houston Family Housing, LP, which owns and operates military housing on post. Formed under the authority of the Residential Communities Initiative, this public-private partnership will eliminate inadequate housing and provide Soldiers and their family members with improved homes and high quality community and recreational facilities.

The FSHFH partnership will construct, improve and maintain Fort Sam Houston family housing for the next 50 years, and assume responsibility and control over every aspect of family housing operations on post.

(Source: RCI Office)

(From Jan. 6 issue)

February

Joint venture

Military, civilian partnership improves training for OR techs

Story and photo by Elaine Aviles
Fort Sam Houston News Leader

A joint venture between Brooke Army Medical Center, Army Medical Department Center and School and a local Veterans Affairs hospital is changing the face of Army operating room technician training.

The Audie L. Murphy Memorial VA Hospital in San Antonio is the newest addition to the AMEDD team and the first civilian hospital to join the 91D (operating room technician) roster.

“This partnership marks a paradigm shift for us,” said Lt. Col. Joseph Paulino, 91D Branch chief. “A lot of elements had to come together to make this happen.”

The hospital, which offers

care to veterans nationwide, is now one of 23 training sites that provide Phase 2 training for OR technicians.

The intense 19-week OR technician training takes part in two phases. Phase 1, a nine-week class at Fort Sam Houston, is primarily conducted in the classroom. Students are then shipped out in groups of up to 10 students to the various Phase 2 sites throughout the world to put their book learning into practice in the OR. They receive real-world, hands-on experience on equipment sterilization, surgery set-up and assisting surgeons.

Prior to the partnership, the students were only sent to Army military treatment facilities. But then, about two years ago, the

potential for war became a nagging source of concern to 91D instructors.

Once the war was under way, the sites were stressed further as medical personnel deployed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, leaving fewer people to handle the additional duty of student training.

Not only did the VA offer a wide variety of medical cases, but it was also close to an Army installation, a necessary element in the collaboration.

“The VA is closely tied with the military,” said Pat Haney, VA operating room supervisor. “Many of us have been active duty or reservists. We’re very much at home training future OR technicians.”

(From Feb. 17 issue)



Spc. Alma Rivera, (left) a 91D operating room technician student, assists physicians and staff members during foot surgery at the Audie Murphy Memorial Veterans Affairs Hospital in San Antonio. The Army and VA hospital have teamed up to improve OR technician training.

Fort Sam Houston News Leader

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February

Ready for real world
Post tests its major accident response capabilities

Story and photo by Shadi May
Fort Sam Houston News Leader

Every military installation has requirements for quarterly and annual exercises, and Feb. 24 was Fort Sam Houston’s turn to conduct its annual mass casualty exercise.

The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate the installation’s readiness ability to respond to an emergency situation.

“The mass casualty exercise is a required training,” said Floyd Williams, director, Plans Training and Mobilization Security and the installation’s antiterrorism officer. “We do it at this time of the year before Fiesta to be prepared to respond during a major event and to make sure our training and procedures are up-to-date. It’s a good capstone exercise to review all the emergency response actions at least once a year.”

During such an exercise, an artificial scenario is presented by the Installation Operations Center. Responding agencies and units are assessed against four major

objectives which are conducting emergency assessment, providing victim care, conducting incident command and providing emergency management.

“I sit back and say nothing,” said Hank Sebastian, chief, Homeland Security Branch Army Medical Department Center and School and an exercise evaluator. “I look at a task book and see whether they have accomplished it or not and report my findings to the exercise director and coordinator. The idea is to get a very candid evaluation of what happened because people learn from that. HotWash is when I ‘speak’ and report the discrepancies.”

HotWash is the term used for a post exercise meeting where all the findings by the observers and evaluators are brought to the attention of IOC.

A key task during such a scenario is to assess the risk to the installation and the surrounding community. For the purposes of this exercise, this task is the job of Fifth Army’s nuclear, biolog-

ical and chemical experts.

“Our decisions are based in part by the information we receive from the incident site,” said Maj. Sheila Campbell, Fifth Army NBC officer. “When the responders make that determination based on the symptoms in the field, we will determine whether we need to evacuate people or have them shelter in place.”

The agent’s persistency is also an important factor.

“After assessing the situations, we make our recommendations to the installation commander on how to protect Fort Sam Houston,” Campbell said. “We can make a determination if we need to request support from outside the post and notify other emergency response teams.”

Assessing the risks could be a lengthy process as it depends on the type of agents used during the attack.

(From March 3 issue)



Sam Ortega, an American Medical Response emergency worker, gets the vital signs of a fire department worker before entering the “hot zone.”

March

Aviators commemorate first military flight

By Yolanda Hagberg
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

About 100 Air Force and Army pilots gathered to hear the chief of Army aviation Brig. Gen. E.J. Sinclair highlight the legacy and the courageous spirit of Lt. Benjamin Foulois, which continues today through Army aviators.

The ceremony, hosted by members of the Stinsons Flight No. 2, Order of Daedalians and the Jack Dibrell Alamo Chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America, was held March 2 at the Roadrunner Community Center to commemorate the 95th anniversary of the first military flight.

Sinclair, commanding general of the U.S. Army Aviation Center, Fort Rucker, Ala., compared Foulois experiments with today’s pilots who are flying and testing new aircraft including unmanned aerial vehicles. “The thing that has not changed is our American Soldiers. They have the same courage Foulois had,” Sinclair said. “There’s no country that can touch us because of our military aviation capability.” Many of the 58,000 Army aviators today have the same determination Foulois had. About 42,000 have deployed since Sept. 11, 2001, and have put in well over 600,000 combat hours.

On the grounds of Fort Sam Houston on March 2, 1910, 1st Lt. Benjamin Foulois climbed onto the seat of a Wright Flyer and made military aviation history when he was ordered to Fort Sam Houston with Signal Corps aeroplane No. 1 to teach himself to fly; he was admonished to take along “plenty of spare parts.” On that machine, he had his first solo flight, first takeoff, first landing and first crackup — thereafter receiving instruction from the Wright Brothers by mail whenever he needed advice on some as yet

obscure aspect of becoming a pilot. He started the flight at 9:30 a.m. and ended it at 9:37 a.m., attaining a height of 100 feet and circling the area at the speed of 50 mph. This was the first flight following the government’s purchase of the 1909 Wright Flyer, the military’s first airplane by one of the military’s true pioneers of flight. After the ceremony, a commemorative wreath was placed at the historic marker, located near the main post flagpole on Stanley Road to mark the 95th anniversary of the “Birth of Military Aviation.” (From March 10 issue)

April

Triumphant medics earn coveted Expert Field Medical Badge

By Elaine Wilson
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

For athletes, the ultimate goal is the Olympics or a coveted spot on a professional team. For military medics, it’s the Expert Field Medical Badge. “It’s a symbol of excellence,” said Capt. James Hall, EFMB officer in charge. “It exemplifies expert proficiency in your field.”

Any service member holding a medical occupational specialty can “try out” for the badge, which is earned through successfully conquering a two-week course held periodically at locations throughout the world. Fort Sam Houston’s EFMB course was at Camp Bullis in March.

Out of the 193 Soldiers who traveled here from as far away as the Sinai to try for the badge, only 14 made the final cut. Not bad, considering the average success rate throughout EFMB’s 40

year history is 14 percent. Judging by the attrition rate, most people would say it’s just as difficult to achieve as a draft to an NFL team. During the first week, the cadre, who are primarily from the Army Medical Department Center and School and Brooke Army Medical Center, run the candidates through the “lanes” showing them the standard they must achieve to pass. The lanes are a series of exercises in medical- and common-skills tasks including day and night land navigation, communications, medical treatment and evacuation. “This is what it is all about,” said Maj. Gen. George Weightman, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department commander, at the medal-pinning ceremony. “This is absolutely related to real world and is relevant training. Only people who have the badge know how tough it is. You’ve exceeded the standard.” (From April 7 issue)



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class David Falk

A four-man team of Soldiers emerge from the “smoke” while advancing through a litter obstacle course. For the course, the Soldiers have to carry a litter with a live “patient” through narrow passageways, high walls and rocky terrain.

May

BRAC proposal increases workforce, brings new missions

By Shadi May and Elaine Wilson
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

It was good news for San Antonio’s sole Army post.

The Department of Defense’s base realignment and closure proposal, announced May 13 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, includes a recommended 4,300-person increase to Fort Sam Houston’s workforce and a significant expansion of post missions.

“Today’s recommendations will allow Fort Sam Houston to become DoD’s premier medical training base,” said Col. Richard Agee, Army Medical Department Center and School chief staff, during an announcement of the BRAC decision Friday. “We are pretty confident Fort Sam Houston will be here for a long time.”

In total, Fort Sam Houston will welcome 2,620 military, 1,613 civilians and 4,995 students. Fort Sam Houston is currently home to more than 26,000 military and civilians, along with 36,000 incoming and outgoing students throughout the year.

The new jobs will be a mix of inter-county

transfers and a creation of new positions, the congressman said, which will be needed to support the proposed incoming activities.

A key incoming activity involves a transfer of medical functions from Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base to Brooke Army Medical Center.

“The inpatient workload from Wilford Hall will come to BAMC,” Agee said. “That will be a huge impact on BAMC, which can handle the additional work.”

The additional capacity would establish BAMC as DoD’s major medical presence in the area, post leaders said.

Another significant impact would be the assumption of the enlisted basic and specialty medical training from the Air Force and Navy, which would transform Fort Sam Houston into the only joint enlisted specialty training environment in DoD.

The Department of Defense has set up a Web site for more information about BRAC and related subjects to include employment concerns and questions at www.dod.mil/brac.

(From May 19 issue)



Courtesy photo

Lopez dies at 94

A Special Troops Battalion Honors Platoon caisson carries Medal of Honor recipient Master Sgt. Jose Lopez to his final resting place May 22 at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Lopez received the Medal of Honor for his heroics during the Battle of the Bulge in 1944. He was the oldest living Hispanic recipient of the medal. He died May 16 at a daughter’s home in San Antonio.

Changes of command

Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley, Army Surgeon General; incoming Brooke Army Medical Center and Great Plains Regional Medical Command commander, Col. James K. Gilman; and outgoing commander, Brig. Gen. C. William Fox Jr., inspect the troops June 22 during the change of command ceremony.



Photo by Kelly Schaefer



Photo by Esther Garcia

Lt. Col. Bruce McVeigh relinquishes command of 232nd Medical Battalion as he passes the battalion color to Col. Bradley Freeman, commander, 32nd Medical Brigade, during the change of command ceremony June 17 at the MacArthur Parade Field. Incoming commander is Lt. Col. Brian Kueter, former executive officer for the battalion.

June



Photo by Esther Garcia

Outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Jimmie Keenan, passes the Camp Bullis color to United States Army Garrison Commander, Col. Garry F. Atkins, who passes the guidon to incoming commander, Lt. Col. Dennis LeMaster, at the change of command ceremony held June 16 at Camp Bullis.

Col. Russell Czerw assumes command of the U.S. Army Dental Command from Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley, Army Surgeon General and Army Medical Department commander, after Col. Sidney Brooks relinquishes command during a ceremony June 23 at the MacArthur Field Parade.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

Col. Clifford Walker (left) accepts the U.S. Army Veterinary Command guidon from Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley, Army Surgeon General and Army Medical Command commander, after outgoing commander Col. Charles Kelsey Jr. relinquished command. The ceremony was June 24 at the MacArthur Parade Field.



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July

Army set to partner in trauma blood substitute study

By Nelia Schrum
Brooke Army Medical Center Public Affairs Office

A blood substitute that might save lives on the battlefield will be tested in San Antonio through a research protocol already under way in 22 communities across the nation.

Brooke Army Medical Center and University Hospital are participating in a ground-breaking national clinical trial to evaluate the safety and

usefulness of PolyHeme, an oxygen-carrying blood substitute, in increasing survival of critically injured and bleeding patients.

Under the study protocol, treatment would begin before arrival at the hospital, either at the scene of the injury or in the air ambulance, and continue during a 12-hour post injury period in the hospital.

Since blood is not presently carried in ambulances, the use of PolyHeme in these settings has the potential to address a critical unmet medical need for an oxygen-carrying solution where blood is currently not available.

The study will compare the survival rate of patients receiving PolyHeme to that of patients who receive the current standard of care, which is saline solution.

“We are excited to be included in this groundbreaking clinical trial,” said Col. Toney Baskin, an Army trauma surgeon and the principal investigator on the study.

Trauma-related injuries are a leading cause of death among Americans under 45 according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Baskin said.

“Almost one in five trauma patients die from their injuries,” Baskin said. “If we can begin to treat these patients very early with an oxygen-carrying solution and keep their hemoglobin levels up, we might well see more survivors.

Because the patients eligible for this study are unlikely to be able to provide informed consent due to the extent and nature of their injuries, the study will be conducted under federal regulations allowing for clinical research in emergency settings using an exception from the requirement for informed consent. Use of this provision in a study protocol is granted by the Institutional Review Board responsible for approval of the research study if the IRB finds that patients are in a life-threatening situation requiring emergency medical intervention, currently available treatments are unsatisfactory, potential risks are reasonable and participation in the study could provide a direct benefit to the patients enrolled.

Baskin said that San Antonio Airlife personnel would use the blood substitute. San Antonio Airlife has a paramedic and a nurse aboard each of their flights bringing trauma patients to Level 1 facilities like BAMC.

PolyHeme looks like blood, but only stays in a patient’s system for about 24 hours.

“It can buy you time in a trauma situation,” Baskin said. “But it will not eliminate the need for blood banks.” He said that current research indicates the product is very safe and that there are no serious adverse events attributable to the use of PolyHeme.

PolyHeme is a universally compatible, immediately available, oxygen-carrying resuscitative fluid designed for use in urgent blood loss.

(From July 21 issue)



Photo by Shadi May

187th changes hands

Lt. Col. John Collins (left), 187th Medical Battalion commander, accepts the battalion colors one last time from Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Paskos, Army Medical Department Center and School command sergeant major, to relinquish his command to Col. Bradley Freeman, 32nd Medical Brigade commander, July 7. Incoming commander, Lt. Col. Patricia Darnauer said, “I look forward to this responsibility with eagerness,” as she accepted command.



Photo by Esther Garcia

They’re off ...

Soldiers from B Company, 187th Medical Battalion, begin the 5K 28-Soldier formation run July 23 at the 25th annual Combat Medic Run. The 25th annual Combat Medic Run attracted more than 1,300 runners and walkers from the civilian and military communities. Participants competed in a 10K individual run, 10K five-Soldier guidon team, 5K individual run, 5K 28-Soldier formation run and a 2-mile fitness walk.

August



Col. Wendy Martinson receives the color from Hugh Exton, director, Southwest Region Office Installation Management Agency, which symbolizes her acceptance of command of the U.S. Army Garrison during the garrison change of command ceremony Aug. 8 at the post flagpole.

Garrison welcomes new commander

Story and photo by Esther Garcia
Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office

Fort Sam Houston welcomed its new U.S. Army Garrison commander, Col. Wendy Martinson, and bid farewell to the former, Col. Garry F. Atkins, at a change of command ceremony Aug. 8 at the post flagpole.

Maj. Gen. George Weightman, commander, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston, and host for the ceremony, thanked the more than 200 guests from the San Antonio and Fort Sam Houston community who attended the ceremony.

“It is a testimony to not only the city, but the community and the military community that all of you have come here to witness the passing of the

flag,” Weightman said. “Certainly, the Fort Sam Houston Garrison touches the entire community and the daily lives of everyone in the community. It is an immense responsibility and no one has done it better than Col. Garry Atkins.”

Weightman touched on the numerous changes and responsibilities borne by Atkins during his two-year tenure as the garrison commander: the health and welfare of more than 25,000 employees and their families, environmental issues on the post, mobilization of over 6,000 reservists in support of the Global War on Terrorism, conversion of the garrison structure into the Most Efficient Organization, the integration of the Installation Management Agency, and Base Realignment and Closure.

(From Aug. 11 issue)

New rehab center to support recovering service members

By Phillip Reidinger
Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office

Service members with severe injuries who require extensive treatment and rehabilitation will soon get help at a new facility that will be built on Fort Sam Houston near Brooke Army Medical Center.

The \$30 million rehabilitation center, funded by the nonprofit Intrepid Heroes Fund, will be built on a 4.5-acre site adjacent to two new 21-room Fisher Houses. The site already contains two active Fisher Houses.

“We already provide great care to these warriors. The new center will make it even better,” said Brig. Gen. James Gilman, BAMC commander. “It will be a great asset for Brooke Army Medical Center. We’re honored to have it built here.”

The anticipated cost of the National Armed Forces Physical Rehabilitation Center includes equipment, furniture and furnishings. Ground-breaking for the planned four-story, 65,000 gross

square feet center is planned for fall of this year.

The facility will include indoor and outdoor rehabilitation facilities and a day care center to support accompanying family members staying at the Fisher Houses.

The first floor will house a running gait analysis, dual force plate treadmill, uneven terrain modeler, swimming pool and a child center. The second floor will be dedicated to prosthetic manufacturing. The third floor will accommodate physical therapy services, a prosthetic workshop, a gym and a 30-foot climbing and rappelling wall. The fourth floor will house occupational therapy services, a daily life activities lab and a running track.

The center will support treatment and rehabilitation of patients with amputated limbs, severe burns, blindness and head trauma. The goal is to rehabilitate service members to a level of physical condition where the decision to continue to serve on active duty is for “other than the loss of limb,” according to the fund’s Web site.

(From Aug. 4 issue)

August

Fifth U.S. Army assists in relief efforts in hurricane’s aftermath

By Master Sgt. C.S. Allbright
Fifth U.S. Army Public Affairs Office

Fifth U.S. Army joined thousands of Defense Department personnel in relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Even as the hurricane struck Aug. 29, Fifth Army established a lifeline in Louisiana, one of the 21 states within the unit’s area of responsibility for training and mobilization.

Lt. Gen. Robert T. Clark, the Fifth Army commanding general, in response to a request from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, sent a defense coordinating officer into the area. Col. Anthony Daskevich, the commander of Headquarters, 4th Brigade, 75th Division (Training Support) at Fort Sill, Okla., established a forward element while the winds were still raging through the southeast.

The DCO is the military liaison with FEMA to coordinate military support in the event of a man-made or natural disaster. The military works with FEMA to reduce the loss of life, mitigate damage and provide life support.

Since the hurricane, Fifth Army has provided about 70 people directly on the scene and 100 more at its headquarters in Fort Sam Houston’s historic quadrangle to help with the relief and recovery efforts.

The U.S. Army Northern Command in Colorado established Joint Task Force Katrina to support FEMA. The First U.S. Army took charge of the JTF, which has in its arsenal a myriad of military assets, and it operates out of Camp Shelby, Miss. Since the establishment of the JTF, Fifth Army supported efforts across the spectrum.

Most dramatically, Brig. Gen. Mark A. Graham, the newly installed Fifth U.S. Army deputy commanding general, and a handful from the unit, led the military contingent’s portion in the evacuation of the Superdome. Soldiers from Fifth Army joined the Louisiana National Guard, the Air National Guard, Coast Guard and local officials in evacuating nearly 63,000 from New Orleans.

A second contingent, led by Col. John A. Simpson, deployed to Baton Rouge, La., to assist the defense coordinating officer. A third contingent left Friday to re-supply the teams in Baton Rouge and provide much-needed vehicles to get around the devastated areas.

(Maj. Sheila Campbell and Margaret Broadbent, from the Fifth Army Public Affairs Office, also contributed to this story.)

(From Sept. 8 issue)



Photo by Maj. David C. Beachman
A flyover of New Orleans shows a city underwater.

September



Photo by Spc. Kasey Miller

Medics volunteer

Pfc. Nathan Sullivan, a Soldier medic from the 232nd Medical Battalion, records a patient's current medications during a medical assessment and screening of a Hurricane Katrina evacuee Sept. 3. More than 100 Soldier medics from the battalion provided volunteer assistance for relief efforts at KellyUSA. Among their many volunteer tasks, the Soldiers conducted medical screening for more than 7,000 evacuees, administered more than 3,000 immunizations and assisted in food and water distribution.

Fort Sam Houston continues Hurricane Rita support

By Elaine Wilson
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

Although large-scale Hurricane Rita relief efforts are slowly scaling down, Fort Sam Houston's supporting role still continues at a steady pace.

In the past week, and in the midst of the city's own fears of hurricane fall out, the U.S. Army Garrison on post and at Camp Bullis pitched in as Fort Sam Houston assumed a full blown hurricane support operation.

The ongoing operation, which started Sept. 19, encompassed fields, buildings, gyms, barracks and dining facilities as the installation scrambled to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the newly formed Joint Task Force Rita, commanded by Fifth U.S. Army Commander Lt. Gen. Robert Clark.

"The post's mission is threefold," said Dale Roth, chief of the Installation Operations Center. "We are supporting the JTF, FEMA and Texas state activities to include supporting National Guard mobilization. Each area takes an enormous amount of effort, teamwork and coordination."

The most visible of these missions has been the FEMA support, as the Fort Sam Houston

Police extended hours at access control points and blocked off roads on post to escort hundreds of 18-wheelers onto the field across from the Jimmy Brought Fitness Center.

"We had about 150 trucks on post at any given time," Roth said.

The post serves as a federal operational staging area for the trucks. When the hurricane hit early Sept. 24, hundreds of trucks moved out as others moved in to take their place. The trucks, mobilized in Fort Worth, Texas, were packed with water, ice, meals ready to eat and other relief resources destined for hurricane-ravaged areas along the coast.

As of Sept. 20, the post had facilitated the movement of 785 trucks to the small rural towns in southwest Louisiana and southeast Texas hardest hit by the powerful storm, Roth said. Each truck can hold a staggering 179,000 MREs, 41,000 pounds of ice and nearly 18,000 liters of water.

"There aren't any words to explain how much work went into this," said Col. Wendy Martinson, U.S. Army Garrison commander. "People who saw a need rose to the occasion."
(From Sept. 29 issue)

Blood is fluid of life

The Brooke Army Medical Center Blood Bank is running critically low on AB Negative blood. Akeroyd Blood Donor Center is reaching out to you for your support to accomplish a mission for life. Contact the donor center to lend a helping hand. To donate blood now, call the Akeroyd Blood Donor Center at 295-4655 or 295-4989.





Photo by Alexandra Nordeck

Fall Fest fun

Lancelyn Barbee feeds Sheba Saturday at the Fort Sam Fall Fest Oct 15. The Fort Sam Houston Morale, Welfare and Recreation Equestrian Center offered pony rides, hay rides and treats for horses at the event. The Fort Sam Fall Fest brought in more than 3,000 people from the Fort Sam Houston and San Antonio communities.

Emergency numbers



Dial 911 when calling from a Fort Sam Houston or Camp Bullis telephone number prefix.

Dial 554-4713 when calling from a cell phone or from anywhere on Fort Sam Houston other than the post telephone number prefixes.

On Camp Bullis, **dial 295-7517** from a cell phone or non-Camp Bullis prefix.

The fire prevention office has phone stickers for these numbers. Stop by Building 4196, Room A37 or call 221-5452.

Post bans driving while using communication devices

By Elaine Wilson
Fort Sam Houston Public Information Office

A new safety policy is the talk of the post, but drivers will have to limit their discussions to their office water cooler. They are no longer allowed to talk on a cell phone while driving on Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis.

The policy also bans drivers from using any other wireless communication device, both hand-held and hands-free, while driving on post.

“We are making a statement that the safety of our Soldiers and workforce is paramount,” said Guadalupe Gomez, Fort Sam Houston safety manager.

Maj. Gen. George Weightman, Army Medical Department Center and School and Fort Sam Houston commanding general, established the policy to place more emphasis on the safety of pedestrians and motor vehicle drivers on Fort Sam Houston. The policy became effective Oct. 13.

“Sustaining a safe environment is the foundation of our quality of life as a military community,” Weightman said. “Drivers who are distracted from the business of operating a vehicle are a potential safety hazard.”

The policy affects any driver on post — military or civilian, employee or visitor — and applies to all vehicles, whether privately owned, government owned or Government Service Administration. Drivers must either hang up, or, if unable to wait, safely stop and put the car in park before they start dialing.

The only exceptions to the policy are for emergency responders using cell phones and hand-held radios, or range safety personnel oper-

ating radios on active ranges.

If a post military or civilian employee is caught violating the policy, a Fort Sam Houston Police officer will issue the driver a DD Form 1408 citation, said Ray Acuna, deputy provost marshal. The citation will be processed at the Provost Marshal Office and then forwarded to the driver’s commander, chief, activity chief or director. Repeat incidents can lead to revocation of driving privileges on the installation, Acuna said.

For military or civilian visitors to the post, the police officer will issue a citation, and the information will be recorded at the Provost Marshal Office. Repeat offenders will be barred from the installation for noncompliance with installation policies, Acuna said.

The policy follows a trend of cell phone bans for drivers cropping up throughout the country and other Army posts. Fort Dix, N.J., prohibits the use of cell phones while driving to comply with a state law. In Texas, teenagers are prohibited from using wireless communication devices for the first six months after they get their driver’s license. Bus drivers with minors on board are also unable to use them unless there is an emergency or the bus is stopped.

“We either make a difference or we don’t,” said Gomez. “Not everyone agrees with the policy but we feel safety is a serious issue.”

The nation’s top safety agencies agree. Numerous studies support the dangers of talking or text messaging while driving.

For more information about the policy, call the Installation Safety Office at 221-3857. (From Oct. 27 issue)

November

Fort Sam Houston MWR shines in Army-wide competition

By Alexandra Nordeck
Morale, Welfare and Recreation

The Fort Sam Houston Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation had a strong showing in this year’s Festival of the Performing Arts and Recreation Program Competition, a Community and Family Support Center awards program that includes installations Army-wide.

The competition, which takes place April through September, provides an outlet to show-case talent and enhance opportunities for Soldiers and family members.

In the music and theater awards category, the Harlequin Dinner Theatre received third place for outstanding production for “Crimes of the Heart.” The play also garnered awards for Bruce Shirkey, third place for outstanding direction; Yvette Oaks-Crabtree, third place for outstanding costume design; and Carole Asbury, second place for outstanding performance by an actress in a leading role.

Fort Sam Houston Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers also received awards for its entry “BOSS Presents Soldier Supermodel Search” at

the Hacienda Recreation Center. Ben Paniagua was awarded first place for outstanding direction of a BOSS variety show. Other awards were presented to Robert Breazeale, second place for outstanding set design and outstanding lighting design of a BOSS Variety Show, and Spc. Timothy Balke, first place for outstanding instrumental soloist.

Fort Sam Houston’s third entry into the competition was in the children and youth programs, teen talent competition category. The performing arts group, The Rainbow Kids, earned Ron Joy a first place award for outstanding direction of a variety entertainment. Seven-year-old Christian Shreckhise received an award for second place for outstanding male vocal soloist.

“This award is a team effort and a tribute to all the members of The Rainbow Kids, their parents and the Fort Sam Houston Youth Services,” Joy said. “It’s an honor to accept this award on behalf of everyone involved.”

Yari Santiago also received a special commendation for ongoing creative and technical support of recreation programming events at Fort Sam Houston.

(From Nov. 10 issue)



Photo by Elaine Wilson

Mission Thanksgiving

Barbara George teaches her guests, Pvt. Sierra Kirkland (left) and Spc. Carla Luke, how to dress a turkey with greens. A thousand Soldiers from the 187th and 232nd Medical Battalions and 500 families participated in Mission Thanksgiving this year. The 32nd Medical Bridage program pairs Soldiers with local families for the holiday.

Fort Sam Houston celebrates, commemorates



Photo by Elaine Wilson
Soldiers from the Fort Sam Houston Special Troops Battalion Honors Platoon fire a cannon during a salute to the 50 states during the Fourth of July celebration. The cannon salute is a traditional ceremony that commemorates the Declaration of Independence.



Photo by Elaine Wilson
The 3rd U.S. Infantry Continental Color Guard presents the national and U.S. Army colors during the cannon salute to the reviewing officer, Lt. Gen. Robert T. Clark, Fifth U.S. Army commanding general, April 17 at the Fiesta Salute ceremony on MacArthur Parade Field. The ceremony was one of the highlights of the Fort Sam Houston Fiesta. The massed colors of Army units such as U.S. Army Medical Command, Fifth U.S. Army, U.S. Army South, the Army Medical Department Center and School and Brooke Army Medical Center represent the diversity of military missions assigned to Fort Sam Houston.



Photo by Bart Keyes
Lt. Gen. Robert T. Clark, Fifth U.S. Army commander; Col. Richard Rayfield, director of plans and policies, Joint Information Operations Center; Navy Commander George Fadok, deputy director of operations, Joint Information Operations Center; and Col. Mary Kay Hertog, 37th Training Wing commander, Lackland Air Force Base, prepare to present a wreath to honor the nation's fallen heroes at the Memorial Day ceremony at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.



Photo by Elaine Wilson
Spc. Tavita Nuusa, D Company, 187th Medical Battalion, salutes after he presents battle streamers to Special Troops Battalion Sgt. Maj. Garland Haynes during Fort Sam Houston's Army birthday and Flag Day ceremony June 14.



Photo by Elaine Wilson



Photo by Elaine Wilson
(Above) District 4 Councilman Richard Perez, chair of the city council military affairs committee, escorted by Spc. Jeremy Bryant, presents a memorial wreath on behalf of the citizens of San Antonio Sept. 9 during a combined Patriot Day and Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Recognition Day ceremony.

(Left) A bugler from the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, from Fort Myer, Va., sounds "Taps" at the Veterans Day ceremony. Nearly 1,000 people attended the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

December

SFAC marks second anniversary

Story and photo by Phil Reidinger
Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office

The Soldier and Family Assistance Center commemorated its second anniversary of operations during a reception Dec. 12. Several hundred volunteers and supporters from the San Antonio community attended the open house at the center, located in the Powless Guest House at Fort Sam Houston. SFAC was established in December 2003 to support service members wounded as a result of combat operations supporting Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and receiving treatment

at Brooke Army Medical Center. The SFAC also supports family members of Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen visiting patients. In 2004, the SFAC accommodated more than 27,000 visits. In 2005, the center supported more than 50,000 visits and requests for assistance by patients and their families. The SFAC is staffed on a daily basis by 46 volunteers, for 13 hours per day. “Without the community volunteers and the assistance of the medical hold Soldiers and Marines who work at the SFAC, our doors would have to close,”

said Judith Markelz, SFAC coordinator. Markelz said the center has received more than 10,000 donations from corporations, small businesses, churches, nonprofit organizations, children and adults across the nation. “There is nothing more comforting to service members and their families than a home-baked chocolate chip cookie and other good food donated to us by so many caring, wonderful people in the San Antonio community,” Markelz said. (From Dec. 15 issue)



Judith Markelz (far left), Soldier and Family Assistance Center coordinator, and Col. Wendy Martinson, U.S. Army Garrison commander, host SFAC's second anniversary commemoration Dec. 12.